

Superintendent's Corner

Creativity is critical

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
SUPERINTENDENT

How did Shrewsbury educators start their summer? For almost 200 of them, it was with a week of intensive professional development. The week after classes ended for students, these teachers participated in a week of voluntary, unpaid professional learning at our district's fourth annual Summer Institute, held at Shrewsbury High School. The Summer Institute, which is the brainchild of Assistant Superintendent Mary Beth Banios, provides various courses taught by both outside experts and our own faculty

There is no doubt that being able to think critically and determine creative solutions to challenging problems are already critical workplace skills, and they will almost certainly become more important in the future.

on topics related to the district's strategic initiatives, from mathematics instruction to ways to effectively utilize technology to enhance learning. I personally had the

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Retirees recognized, volunteerism throughout the district and SELCO works with students

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"Taking Root" in Preschool, future architects invited to Harvard University, Road Scholars Race wrap-up and Hunger Banquet



The photo above shows Floral Street School 3rd grade students taping a public service announcement about energy and water conservation with SELCO. See story on page 2.

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

~Jane Goodall ~

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Community, conservation and commercials

SELCO recently completed a "green" project with Floral Street School 3rd grade students and Coolidge School 4th grade students to produce energy and water conservation public service announcements. These television ads will run on the History Channel, HGTV, and Nickelodeon throughout the summer months. In the photo above, starting on the right, are Coolidge students Cathy Nguyen, Faatima Adnan, Kyle Vu, Jackie Pratt, Marketing & Customer Care Manager for SELCO, Elijah McElroy, Gianna Generelli, and Mike Reidy working together to create a poster about keeping the air conditioners at 72° in the summer. See related story on page 3, titled "SELCO & students "go green!"

Proven results & strong progress

MR. JOHN SAMIA
SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

The following article was adapted from School Committee Chair John Samia's remarks at the Annual Town Meeting in May.

The Shrewsbury Public Schools are in a significantly better position than they were a year ago due to the additional resources provided from the successful passage of the Proposition 2 ½ override in June 2014.

Class sizes improved significantly. The previous year, the majority of classes

across the district were far above School Committee guidelines. This past year, almost all classes were within School Committee guidelines, sometimes reduced by as much as one third.

**Smaller class sizes...
afforded more time for
teachers to provide more
robust feedback...**

As a result, teachers had more time for individualized and small group instruction, the quality and quantity of instruction and feedback improved, and classroom environments were better. The

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Superintendent's Corner
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pleasure of teaching a course on how teachers can build their own leadership capacity to promote positive change in schools to sixteen of our skillful educators. While I hope they benefited from the experience, the class discussions and presentations also helped me gain insight into the challenges and opportunities for learning that are present in our schools.

Each morning of the Summer Institute begins with a keynote presentation by one of the instructors, and I have been reflecting on the one given by Greg Kulowiec, an outstanding education technology trainer from the organization EdTechTeacher, on the topic of creativity. Over the past few years, some voices in the national debate about public school learning standards and state standardized testing say that these approaches have limited opportunities for creativity in the classroom, for both students and teachers alike. While this is undoubtedly true in some ways, the impact very much depends on how districts and schools choose to implement their instructional programs. In my opinion, the question of standards vs. creativity in education represents a false dichotomy, as I know of many examples of Shrewsbury teachers providing creative learning experiences that at the same time help our students meet rigorous, common standards for attaining certain knowledge or skills. It will be important that we continue to guard against educational practices that make teaching and learning overly prescriptive, while amplifying the innovative work being done by so many educators, here in Shrewsbury and elsewhere.

The need for our students to be able to exercise creativity is critical, not only for developing original ideas and being able to express them, but also in order to determine solutions to unstructured problems that cannot be solved formulaically. There is no doubt that being able to think critically and determine creative

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Retiring staff members recognized

BARBARA A. MALONE
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Fifteen staff members completed their education careers this past June after having served the children of Shrewsbury for a combined total of 285 years! This represents an average of 19 years of service in Shrewsbury for these retirees. Each of these talented educators is recognized for their commitment and dedication to the children of Shrewsbury. Listed below are the names, position, school and years of service to Shrewsbury. We wish them a happy, healthy and relaxing retirement!

The following is a brief summary of their careers and a photograph of each retiree.



Ms. Claire Donovan has served 28 years as an educator, with 22 of those years here in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as the Media Specialist for Shrewsbury High School.



Ms. Ann Gustafson has served 37 years in education with 32 of those years here in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a Special Education Coordinator at Oak Middle School.



Ms. Coreen Hawley has served 26 years as an educator, with 17 of those years served here in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a 1st Grade Teacher from the Walter J. Paton School.



Ms. Gail Johnson-Goodness has served 25 years as an educator, with 18 of those years here in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a Grade 5/6 from Sherwood Middle School.



Ms. Pamela Krause has served 40 years as an educator, with 29 of those years spent in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a Physical Education Teacher serving at Shrewsbury High School.



Ms. Sally Lividini has served 16 years as an educator, with 10 of those years served here in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as an Art Teacher at Spring Street School.



Ms. Martha Paine has served 34 years as an educator, 22 years in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a Media Specialist serving at Beal Early Childhood Center, Coolidge, Floral Street, Paton, and Spring Street Schools.



Ms. Rosemary Shamey has served 32 years as an educator, with the last 22 of those years served here in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a Grade 6 English Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher at Sherwood Middle School.



Ms. Paula Vargas has served 15 years as an educator, with 4 of those years served here in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a Spanish Teacher from Sherwood Middle School.



Ms. Sharon Wester has served 21 years as an educator, with 20 of those years serving the students of Shrewsbury. She is retiring as School Psychologist for Coolidge School.



Ms. Terry Collier has served 48 years in education, with 24 of those years here in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a secretary for Shrewsbury High School.



Ms. Laura Stacey has served 16 years in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a secretary for Coolidge School.



Ms. Sharon Dowd has served in education for over 20 years and has spent almost her entire career in Shrewsbury. She is retiring as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant at Spring Street School.



Ms. Jo-Ann McCarthy has served Shrewsbury for 12 years. She is retiring as an Instructional Aide at the Walter J. Paton School.



Mr. Cliff Leoni served 19 years in education, with 17 of those years devoted to Shrewsbury Public Schools. He is retiring as a Computer Technician for the district.

SELCO opens up, educates & creates

SELCO Holds 4th Grade Open House
More than 500 Shrewsbury students visited the SELCO garage on May 15th to partake in SELCO's annual Open House. This much-anticipated field trip provides all Shrewsbury public and private school 4th graders with a tour of the SELCO facilities where the students learn about power generation, transmission and distribution; energy conservation; electrical safety; cable television and internet distribution; and Shrewsbury Media Connection channels.

On behalf of all the students who have been lucky to attend over the years our schools say "Thank you" to SELCO for all you do for our town.

Floral Street School & Coolidge School Create "Green" TV Ads
In addition to their Open House, SELCO recently completed a project with Floral Street School 3rd grade students and Coolidge School 4th grade students to produce energy and water conservation public service announcements. These television ads

will run on the History Channel, HGTV, and Nickelodeon throughout the summer months. Floral and Coolidge videos can also be viewed online at the following web addresses respectively:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83q_YSS_kE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IZHdAqER8k>

See article on page 3 for details about the project and their collaboration!

Shrewsbury School
Journal

The non-profit Shrewsbury School Journal is published three times a year and reaches every household in the diverse and growing town of Shrewsbury. It is published by the central office of the Shrewsbury Public Schools with the help and expertise of many individuals. The mission of the Shrewsbury School Journal is to provide an accurate source of information about our school system and the town in which we live. We hope to foster a community of continuous learners.

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer
Superintendent

Mary Beth Banios
Assistant Superintendent

Kimberlee Cantin
Project Coordinator/Designer

Students serving our community

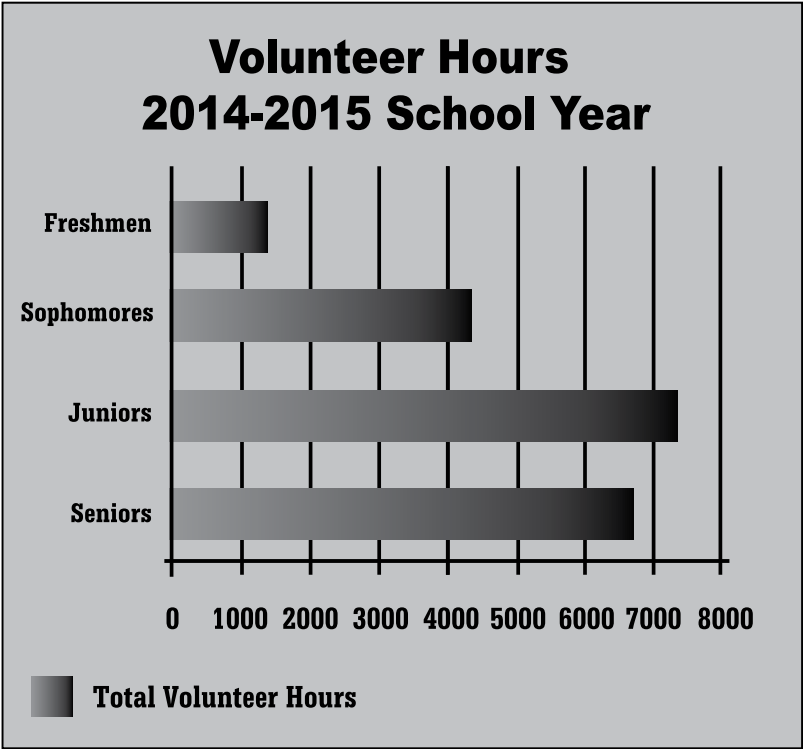
MICHELLE BISCOTTI &
 KATHLEEN KEOHANE
 CO-COORDINATORS OF
 DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEER
 OPPORTUNITIES

Our Shrewsbury High School students have been busy! This year alone, they have contributed over 19,500 volunteer hours to our community at many different organizations and businesses across our town.

Here is a list of some of the places where you may have seen our students:

- Worcester County Food Bank
- Shrewsbury Public Library
- Community Harvest
- Pre-K through middle school classrooms
- Places of worship
- Local hospitals
- Elementary & middle school summer programs
- SHS Media Center, tutoring other students
- Andy’s Attic (clothing for teens in need)

One of the district’s four 2012-2016 Strategic Priorities is to “Increase value to the community by serving community needs through volunteerism.” Specifically, the goal is “to provide 50,000 hours of student community service”. Lofty goal? Apparently not! To date, the high school students alone have logged over 62,000 hours since 2012. That figure doesn’t include all the hours that have been completed at the middle and elementary levels throughout the district. See more articles below and on page 4 & 5 regarding volunteerism throughout our schools.



SELCO & students “go green!”

KELLY FINNERAN
 4TH GRADE TEACHER
 CALVIN COOLIDGE SCHOOL

On May 27th, “SELCO and Coolidge School want you to go green!” could be heard echoing throughout all the fourth grade classrooms at Calvin Coolidge School. In collaboration between Coolidge and SELCO, the fourth grade students were involved in creating and designing posters focusing on energy conservation / water conserva-

tion. These posters can now be seen in commercials that are airing throughout the summer.

Each homeroom was charged with creating four different posters. Wearing the t-shirts the students recently received when visiting SELCO, the students worked in teams of five to six creating posters focusing on energy saving topics such as keeping the indoor temperature at 72° in the summer, replacing your old appliances with energy star appliances, unplugging

computers when not in use, as well as replacing regular light bulbs with energy-efficient

“Working together to design the posters and record our voices for the commercials was exciting and fun!”

CFLs. The excitement in the rooms rose as each group needed to select a student to record his or her voice reading their poster statement. SELCO planned to take all of our hard work and piece together the commercials. The students’ session ended with a SELCO reusable water bottle as a parting gift. Smiles could be seen throughout the school. “The reusable water bottles are great! I add a lemon for flavoring and I reuse the bottle. I’m helping the environment by not polluting the landfills with plastic water bottles,” shared Ahmed Kawas.



Pictured above are students from Mrs. Finneran’s class at Coolidge elementary school working together to design their poster recommending community members grill outdoors to save electricity. From r-l are Doga Zeybek, Tanyon Turner, Jonathan Papazian, William Wu (standing at back), Mattie Madore, and Ahmed Kawas.

Superintendent’s Corner

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solutions to challenging problems are already critical workplace skills, and they will almost certainly become more important in the future. Mr. Kulowiec’s presentation referred to a survey of executives by The Economist Intelligence Unit, which indicated that the top five skills they believe are critical for their employees are problem solving, team working, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. Further, Mr. Kulowiec referenced statistics from a report by MIT and Harvard professors Frank Levy and Richard Murnane that demonstrate that jobs that require performance of routine tasks, whether manual or cognitive, have declined significantly over time, while jobs that require working with new information or solving unstructured problems have increased substantially. Given continuous advancements in technology, especially robotics and artificial intelligence, this trend will likely accelerate.

...it is exciting to see the creativity, innovation, and collaboration being displayed by our teachers as they blend time-honored, proven educational methods with powerful new technologies in order to empower our students with the knowledge and skills they need.

The implications of these trends are important for how we educate Shrewsbury’s young people. I am pleased to remind the community that our school district has been forward-thinking about these issues, and we are in the fourth year of a five year strategic plan that articulates, among other priorities, the importance of “building proficiency at the 21st century skills of communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.” Just as we continue to ensure that our students master the traditional “3 R’s,” it is imperative that they also become fluent in these “4 C’s” in order to be prepared for a future where their economic opportunities will depend largely on possessing them.

Schools face the daunting task of readying students for a world that is rapidly changing and that requires more sophisticated levels of skill than ever before. This is a challenge that Shrewsbury educators are embracing, and it is exciting to see the creativity, innovation, and collaboration being displayed by our teachers as they blend time-honored, proven educational methods with powerful new technologies in order to empower our students with the knowledge and skills they need. The quality of what those almost 200 teachers accomplished in a week of intensive training gives me great confidence that Shrewsbury students will be ready for their futures.

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Results & progress

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impact of lower class size was exemplified by these comments from one of our elementary school teachers:

“I am [now] able to meet individually with my 3rd grade students and monitor their progress more closely. Being able to

...our budget for the coming year will sustain the investment from the recent override while only increasing by 2.20%...

individualize my instruction to fit the various needs of the children my classroom is no longer a struggle. Last year individualized and small group instruction was not possible with 30 students...I find the children this year compared to last year, more relaxed, happier and able to enjoy their time in 3rd grade, thus leading to more academic and personal growth.”

Smaller class sizes also afforded more time for teachers to provide more robust feedback, as noted by one of our parents who stated:

“During the last few years prior to the passing of the override, teachers had to manage so many students in a single class that there was no time available to provide such detailed [and robust written] feedback to each student. I have seen firsthand how this timely and specific feedback has led to improvements in [my child’s] composition skills.”

We updated our curriculum and added instructional resources and technology, which are important for the long-term success of our students. The addition of critical math resources aligned our math curriculum with the state’s expectations and yielded a more rigorous program. The restoration of curriculum coordinators and instructional coaches provided crucial support for new and innovative classroom practices. Investments in textbooks and technology enhanced learning opportunities and provided significant cost savings opportunities.

We continued to face a high frequency and intensity of student mental and behavioral health

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Student architects go to Harvard

DARLENE NOONAN
MEDIA AIDE & ARCHITECTURAL
CURRICULUM CONNECTION
INSTRUCTOR

This past winter the “League of Architects”, which consisted of 22 students from both Sherwood and Oak Middle Schools, met as part of an after school club that focused on, as the name suggests, architecture. Once each week Lauren Polito, an eighth grade Oak student, and I worked with students who were interested in learning about designing structures.



Inside the Harvard Think Tank our Sherwood students could see first hand where grad students take a conceptual idea and make it a reality.

I first met Lauren when she was a student in my fifth grade Architectural Curriculum Connection class at Sherwood. As an eighth grader at Oak she asked me about the possibility of creating a program for students like her, who were passionate about design and architecture. Lauren spearheaded the idea of an after school club and became the League’s president.

The older students from Oak acted as mentors to the younger Sherwood students. It was exciting to see students share ownership of this collaborative project. I observed fabulous teamwork where the younger students were not afraid to ask ques-

tions and give their own input. This type of mentorship opened doors to learning and socializing. The students acquired skills that allowed them opportunities to share appropriate ways to give opinions and constructive input. These are real life skills that will prove to be invaluable once they get into the job market when they are older.

Their work consisted of creating a design (floor plan, elevations and site plan) and building a model of a Tudor Victorian castle that would be located in Ireland. The actual model was approximately 20 inches by 20 inches by 10 inches and was constructed out of recycled materials. It was displayed for a period of time in the main hall outside the Sherwood Media Center.

I was so pleased that the students were able to use their creativity and learn from buildings of the past. Knowledge of historical buildings allows future architects to build smarter buildings in the future. This self-driven educational experience can have such a strong impact because the students don’t get this type of unstructured learning every day. By structuring the program as if the students worked in a corporate setting, they learned how to implement ideas that have been agreed upon through collabora-



Sherwood students listen to a presentation given by a Harvard graduate student. Then later they had the opportunity to share their own ideas. Watch out, Harvard, our Sherwood students are coming your way!

tion among the different departments in the company. All students came together to finish a project that they created based on ideas, imagination and ingenuity.



Pictured above are Sherwood students listening to John Aslanian, far left. The group had total access to the Harvard Design Museum allowing them the ability to see how ideas and reality can be one and the same.

John Aslanian, who oversees student affairs and recruitment at the Harvard University School of Design, saw an article in the Community Advocate and honored students with an invitation to tour Harvard’s “think tank” and Graduate School of Design Museum. The students visited the site and got a chance to interact with a few of his graduate students who have interest in K-12 education design.

My first observation during this visit was that students were eager to learn and share their thoughts with Mr. Aslanian, and the graduate students with whom he works. They were engaged the entire time and made me so proud when, during open discussions, they made John and the grad students pause for thought at some of their suggestions, ideas and solutions! We have innovative thinkers here at Sherwood and Oak!

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Oak students build hunger awareness

D’ARCY MCCARTHY
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER
& COMMUNITY SERVICE &
LEADERSHIP CLUB COORDINATOR
OAK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Around 805 million people in the world do not have enough food to lead a healthy active life. That is one out of every nine people. The fact is that there are far too many people living without an adequate amount of food and not many people actually realize the severity of this. Due to this global issue, the Oak Middle

School Community Service and Leadership Club decided to make reducing hunger and poverty their theme for the 2014-2015 school year.

In order to bring awareness to their theme, the club hosted an Oxfam Hunger Banquet on Wednesday, 3/25/15, from 6:30 PM to 8 PM in the Oak Middle School auditorium and cafeteria. The event was a huge success with over 70 students, families, teachers, and administrators attending! The evening included videos about hunger and poverty, a presentation on local hunger

by the Director of Development, Naomi LeBlanc, from the Worcester County Food Bank, and an interactive dinner/learning experience conducted by Community Service and Leadership Club members Emily Ung and Anna Bolon. Participants left the event with the knowledge needed to make a difference in the fight against world hunger and full bellies thanks to Uno’s Pizzeria and Grill, Bertuccis, Domino’s Pizza, Stop and Shop, Price Chopper, and Wegmans. The event raised 110 lbs. of food for the Worcester County Food Bank and a generous monetary donation for Oxfam America!

Growing a shared vision

LISA ROBINSON
DIRECTOR OF PARKER ROAD
PRESCHOOL

This is a short story about what happens when a community comes together around a shared vision and commitment on behalf of preschoolers.

In the fall of 2012, Mrs. Kristin Stewich, Parker's school nurse, proposed and received a grant from the Shrewsbury Education Foundation (SEF) to build a vertical garden known as a "living wall". Upon receiving the grant, Mrs. Stewich set out on a shopping trip to the garden department at Shrewsbury's Home Depot to purchase the materials for our "living wall" and she met

Mr. David Bottom, a Home Depot associate. Mr. Bottom, a retired music teacher, took quite an interest in our project. Home Depot associates visited Parker Road to learn more about our vision for gardening in preschool.

Following their visit, Home Depot committed to part-

nering with Parker Road to "grow" our grant into a project to engage every student in gardening in his/her classroom. They quickly volunteered their time and donated materials that exceeded our grant budget. Indoor Garden Workshops were constructed by Home

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Pictured above are Sensory Garden builders at 15 Parker Road on Saturday, May 16, 2015. From l-r are students from the SHS Robotics team, Shrewsbury Home Depot crew, Parker Road Garden Group, and Kohl's of Northborough volunteers.

Smiles at the finish line sum it up!

MICHELLE BISCOTTI &
KATHLEEN KEOHANE
CO-COORDINATORS OF
DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITIES

Phew! We were lucky - we had a BEAUTIFUL day for our 8th Annual Road Scholars Race on April 12th. Balmy and clear, not a cloud in the sky - perfect running conditions! And for the 450+ runners who came out to run the 5k or 1 mile, it was a wonderful day to spend time with family and friends. The smiles on the faces of the children as they crossed the finish line were priceless!

We could not have had a successful race without the help of all our volunteers. Thank you to Wendy Bell, Kim and Isabelle Cantin, Dana Canzano, Katie Fox, Heather Gablaski, Alicia Garbarino, Karen Gutekanst, Alison and Jake Kiefer, Elena Lizotte, Jane Lizotte, Katherine Lizotte, Bryan Mabie, Kate MacCausland, Beth McCollum, Lisa McCubrey and our MC from the School Committee, John Samia.

We would like to recognize our local sponsors and ask that you help us to thank these generous businesses by visiting them in the near future: Central One Federal Credit Union, Dunkin Donuts, Lakeway Business District Association (who helped us purchase a new race banner for Maple Ave), Avidia Bank, The Law Offices of Joseph J. Cariglia, Daryl Henry

Arborist & Landscape Contractor, Price Chopper, National Facility Service, Collins & Demac Real Estate and Greendale Physical Therapy.

We could not have provided healthy snacks and drinks without the generosity of our in-kind sponsors as well: Polar Beverages who provided bottled water, Raw Revolution who provided organic energy bars, Marathon Sports who provided our bibs and a very convenient location for picking up the bibs, as well as a 20% discount for runners, Dean Park Pizza who provided bananas and oranges, Wegmans who provided gift certificates for us to give out as prizes, and MECTA (Massachusetts Emergency Care Training Academy) who provided first aid services.

Thank you to all who participated in our race! For pictures and links to our sponsors, please visit shrewsburyroadscholars.org. Please be sure to "like" our Shrewsbury Road Scholars 5k/Run Facebook page to receive a personal invitation for next year's

race! And be sure to check out the Colonial Fund website (<http://shrewsburyps.wix.com/colonialfund>) to see how we will be spending the funds we have raised.



Pictured above are employees from the Maple Ave. Dunkin' Donuts, this year's Gold Sponsor once again! From l-r are Yamilla Nieves, Gabby Kissman, Andrew Cadette, Tony Corrieri and Eli Mena.

Results & progress

CONTINUED from page 4

concerns. The addition of a second clinical behavioral coordinator, increased elementary school psychologists, a new in-school support program at SHS, and contracted social work services helped. These additional resources enabled staff to address issues proactively before they become more problematic. But, while we made strides in this area, this is still an area of need and risk.

Finally, morale is strong. Better working conditions in the classroom and the addition of outstanding new staff energized the climate throughout the district. We are truly fortunate to have such a skilled, smart and dedicated group of administrators, teachers and support staff.

I would also like to highlight for you some of the accomplishments of our district over the past year. These include:

The Center for American Progress ranked our district among the top 1.8% of over 7,000 districts in the nation for "return on educational investment."

The Center for American Progress ranked our district among the top 1.8% of over 7,000 districts in the nation for "return on educational investment."

Newsweek Magazine recently ranked Shrewsbury High School in the top 1% of all U.S. high schools in its attempt to identify those that "do the absolute best job of preparing students for college."

Shrewsbury High School recently earned a silver medal from U.S. News & World Report as part of the publication's annual ranking of the top public high schools around the country.

Shrewsbury High School students completed 19,507 hours of community service this school year alone, and over 62,000 hours of community service over the past four years.

Shrewsbury students continue to earn many awards and championships in academics, the visual arts, music, drama, speech and debate, robotics, mathematics, science and engineering, and athletics.

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Results & progress

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Every school district in the Commonwealth, including Shrewsbury, is facing the challenge of cost inflation. Despite this, our budget for the coming year will sustain the investment from the recent override while only increasing by 2.20%, well below the estimated range for sustainability presented to the Finance Committee in 2014. This is due to the innovative strategic investments we have made that enable our schools to continue to do more with less. The School Committee greatly appreciates the community’s support that makes our schools’ success possible, and we aim to maintain the community’s investment in public education in a manner that meets students’ needs in the most cost effective way.

Architects

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The second observation I had was that our students AND the Harvard grad students were having fun contributing ideas and concepts - even though the ages ranged from 10 to 27 years of age. This is a key component to growth when it comes to learning. The grad students were as impressed with our children as our children were with them. Age isn’t a boundary when shared learning is happening - which allows for limitless opportunities and outcomes for all involved.

This opportunity opened so many doors for our students. It showed the many ways we can think about things (there is no right or wrong way), how we go about finding answers (collaboration), and when we work together all things are possible (positive outcomes). The idea that this trip solidified for our students was that the castle model they made in middle school could be their first step toward believing their future designs could one day be on display at the Harvard University School of Design Museum – or anywhere in the world.

I hope to continue this program for new students. The experience was invaluable. Mr. Aslanian and his crew were so generous and gracious, not just with the Harvard facility but with their knowledge and ideas as well. Inspiring!

It is a trip I will never forget and the students are already asking about next year. The possibilities are endless! The students who attended compiled all the photos onto a website. They are way ahead of me there (see, I’m learning from them)! Thanks to the hard work of Andrew Friedman you can see our photos here: <http://tinyurl.com/archclub>

Leadership & service at Sherwood

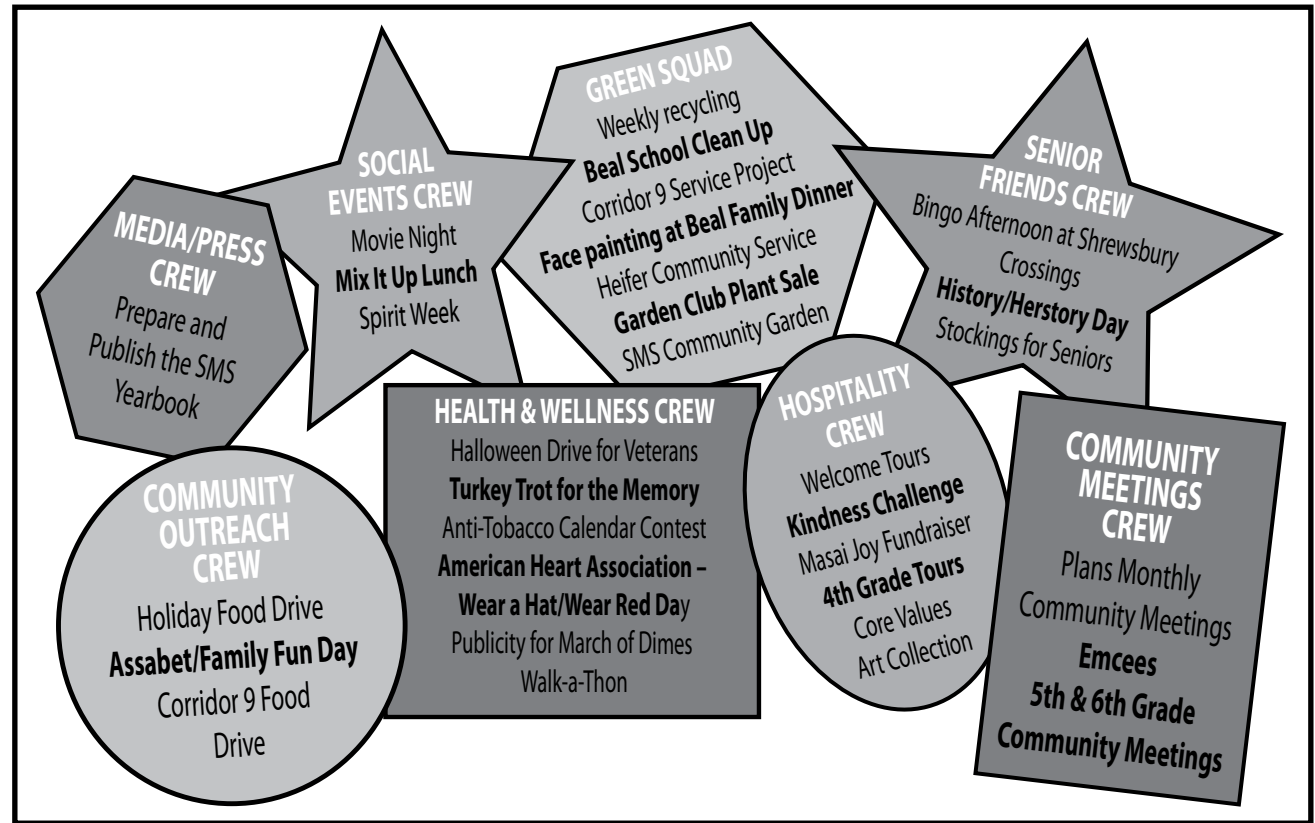
MICHELLE BISCOTTI &
KATHLEEN KEOHANE
CO-COORDINATORS OF
DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITIES

Each school year, hundreds of our students at Sherwood Middle School (SMS) join Student Voice, a student organization devoted to different aspects of leadership and volunteerism both in the school

and throughout the greater Shrewsbury community.

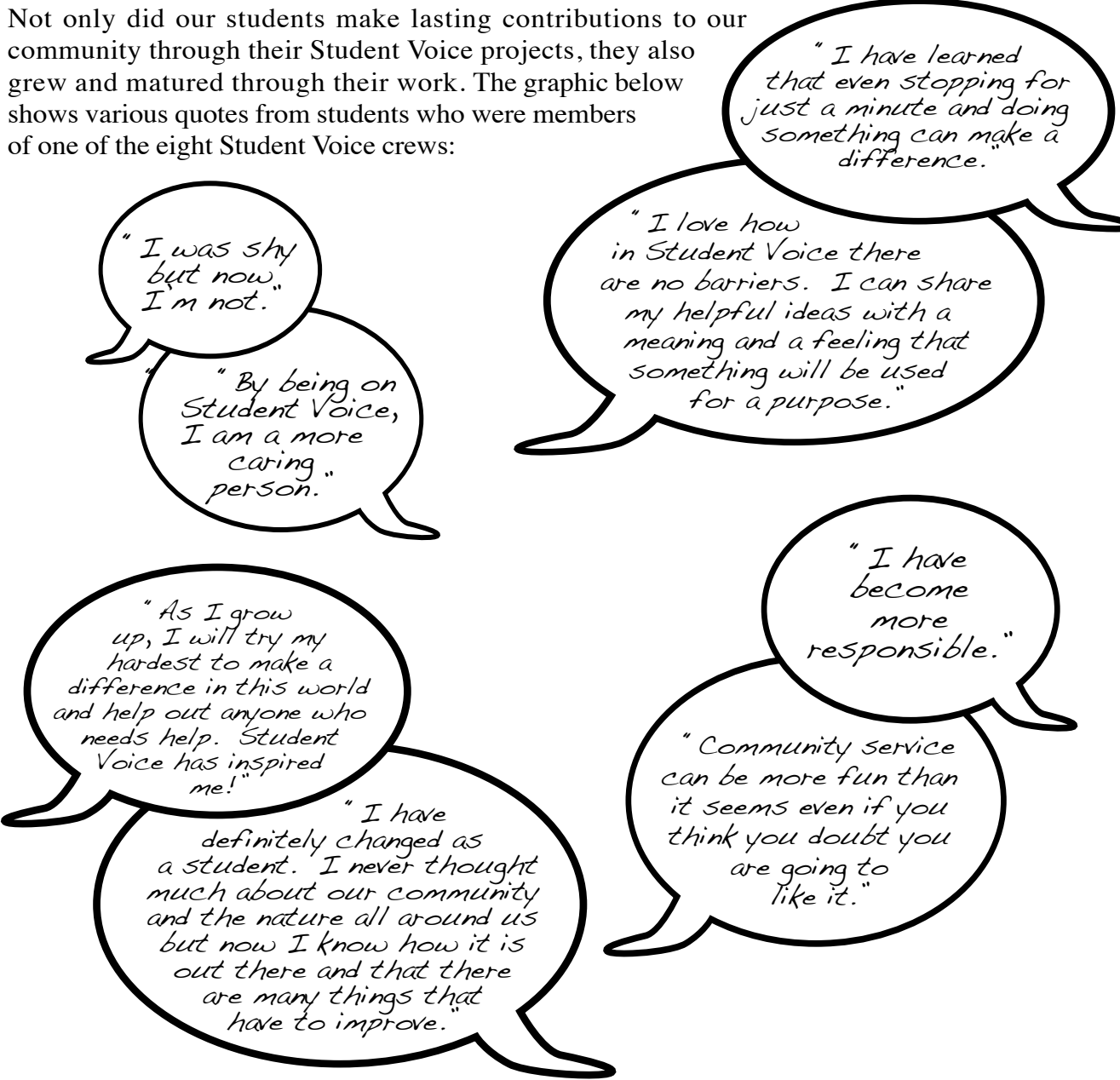
This year, over 300 students participated on one of eight “crews”, each with a different focus, but all with a mission to serve. Crews met weekly during the school day to plan their activities but then gave of their own time after school and on weekends to complete their projects.

Carol Virzi, a fifth grade teacher at SMS, oversees Student Voice with assistance from over 25 faculty members. Working together, students and staff members made valuable contributions to their school and our community at large over the course of the school year. We are grateful for all of their hard work.



The graphic above shows examples of the service projects the eight Student Voice crews completed throughout the 2014-2015 school year.

Not only did our students make lasting contributions to our community through their Student Voice projects, they also grew and matured through their work. The graphic below shows various quotes from students who were members of one of the eight Student Voice crews:



Everyone wants to matter

GRETA GRAY
SOCIAL SCIENCES TEACHER
SHREWSBURY HIGH SCHOOL

Each year at their Commemoration ceremony, the Senior Class invites one faculty member who has inspired them to address the class. This year Greta Gray, who teaches psychology as a member of the Social Sciences Department at SHS, was selected and presented a speech that captured the passion that teachers feel for their students and their profession. Her remarks are excerpted below.

I am honored to be standing here in front of you tonight. But to be honest, I am also terrified. I know what you are thinking, “She is a maniac in the classroom; she can’t possibly be nervous.” But I am! And I think that it is important for you to know that there are moments in your life and career in which you will be stressed and terrified, but you push through it, and maybe even grow stronger and learn something from the experience.

To calm my nerves, I am going to pretend that I am in the classroom, one of the most comfortable places that I could be. If tonight is my lesson, then I know what you will expect; I will talk about psychology and of course my daughter, Gracie. And it wouldn’t be out of the ordinary if I break out into a song and dance.

Honestly, I had a pretty good idea of what I was going to talk about tonight up until just a few weeks ago. I was at Sunday Mass when I became intrigued by the priest’s homily. He said, “Everyone wants the same thing in life.” You are probably expecting, as I did, that the next thing he was going to say was love, good health, money, or success. Nope. He said that everyone wants to MATTER. This really got me thinking and questioning if I matter.

Before I answer that question, I want to tell you what I remember from my psychology class in high school. It is not the function of the mind, or why we behave the way we do, but it is one statement that my psychology teacher said to the class before we graduated. He told us to think about what we played as young children, and that this is our true desire in life. Since I can remember, I LOVED playing school and being the teacher. Even as a child engaged in pretend play, I was very serious and professional about my “classroom.” I vividly remember lining up my stuffed animals into rows on my bed. I even created an attendance sheet and gradebook. I would play “teacher” for hours. I am lucky in that I have always known that my calling was to become a teacher. I absolutely love coming to Shrewsbury High School every morning. I would even say that I am excited to be here with my colleagues who have now become my family, and my students, who every year become “my kids.” I truly do love my job! I tell you this story because I want you to think about what you have always wanted to do, and regardless of how much money you will make, or how easily you can climb the ladder to success, I want you to following your calling so that you too can absolutely love what you do.

Now to answer the question that I pondered over in Church on that early spring day a few weeks ago, I truly believe that I do matter, and that my life matters. Of course I matter to Gracie like no other person besides her father could. But I wholeheartedly believe that my career allows me to matter to others too. I hope that in some way I have mattered to at least one of you, at some point over the past four years.

Every September, at the beginning of the school year, I am hopeful that I will matter to at least one student. Some days I am satisfied and feel as if I have made an impact. But there are those days that I wish I could rewind and have a “do-over.” But overall, I can say that I matter. Last year, after classes were over, and the Seniors were preparing to graduate just as you are, I had a student come to me and thank me. She told me that it was because of me that she was going to school to study psychology and that she wanted to become a high school psychology teacher just like me. This is a moment that all of us teachers live for. I couldn’t have felt like I mattered more to another person than at that moment in time. I actually had an impact on another human being, and my life and career had (and still do have) purpose. This is one of the best feelings in the world, and I am so blessed that I can in some way matter to you too, even if it is only for this moment.

I know that each and every one of you matter. You matter to me, you matter to your school, and most importantly, you matter to your parents. But how are you going to matter to others? What impact are you going to have on another human being? How will you live a life in which you continue to matter? Are you going to mold the minds of our future? Are you going to save lives? Are you going to create a masterpiece, a technological advancement, a cure for cancer? Whatever you do, stop and appreciate how much you matter.



Pictured above is SHS Social Sciences teacher Greta Gray greeting the 2015 class officers (Max Petrovsky, Taylor O’Connor, Ryan Beals, Grace Rocco and Sarath Mohan) as she exits the stage after delivering her speech to students, families and staff at Commemoration on May 26, 2015.

Growing a shared vision

CONTINUED from page 5

Since February of 2013, Mr. Bottom has visited every classroom and every session, 19 visits each year, to share his passion about gardening and to teach the children about planting seeds and tending a garden. Mr. Bottom’s passion is spellbinding - every child is literally mesmerized as he holds a tiny seed in his hand and talks about how important it is to be a garden-er/farmer.

Then every child holds a tiny seed in his/her hand, patiently waiting for a turn, to plant in vessels full of dirt on top of the indoor garden.



Preschool students from Mrs. Vangel’s class enjoy planting seeds in the new garden beds at Parker Road Preschool.

Nearly three years, later “Taking Root at Parker Road” has surely taken root and continues to grow! On Saturday, May 16th, Parker Road held a “community build” to construct an outdoor sensory garden at 15 Parker Road. Another grant funded by SEF and our continued partnership with Home Depot made this next phase of Taking Root possible. Three associates from the Kohl’s department store in Northborough and eight SHS students from the Robotics team volunteered their time on Saturday to build with Parker staff and the crew of four associates from the Home Depot. What an amazing effort! It was a shining example of what can happen when a group of caring and committed individuals come together on behalf of a good cause. Today, “Taking Root at Parker Road” is part of the learning experience for all preschoolers. I can’t think of a better way to provide young children with an opportunity to engage in all domains of learning.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this amazing project.

“Go green!”

CONTINUED from page 3

“We learned a lot about energy conservation from making these posters as well as going on our trip to SELCO,” students from Miss Finneran’s class shared. “Working together to design the posters and record our voices for the commercials was exciting and fun!” shared Doga Zeybek.

Coolidge School would like to thank SELCO for this opportunity to be involved in this educational endeavor. So remember..... “SELCO and Coolidge School want you to go green!”

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Bus Registration Wrap-up

Shrewsbury schools on time bus registration closed on June 1, 2015 and this year, a record number of families completed the process on time!



ENTER to WIN

As we promised, to show our appreciation, four families were chosen to receive a fee rebate and four families will receive gift cards.

Elementary (K-4)

Reading during the summer months ensures that students maintain their literacy skills. Students entering grades Kindergarten through grade four are encouraged to read and understand books that are suitable for their level of reading and comprehension. Younger students may not be able to read independently but are encouraged to read with an adult or listen to books read aloud. In addition, children are required to read three selections prior to returning to school in the fall. Each student should choose one title from the required grade level list, be sure to select a title that most closely matches the independent reading level listed on the final report card. In addition to the required selection, the student must also read two books from the leveled list that matches their independent reading level. Once students return to school this fall, there will be discussions and activities related to the summer reading selections.

Middle (5-8)

Students entering grades 5-6 at Sherwood Middle School should read THREE books from the Summer Reading List and complete ONE graphic organizer (Fiction or Non-Fiction) based on one of the three books they read. Students will engage in activities related to summer reading in the fall in their ELA classes.

Students entering grades 7-8 at Oak Middle School are asked to read three novels over the summer, and at least ONE of those novels must be from the Sponsored Novel section of the Oak Summer Reading List. This will ensure that they have a Summer Reading Workshop to attend at Oak in the fall. Students should also complete ONE graphic organizer (Fiction or Non-Fiction) for their Sponsored Novel.

SUMMER READING

Shrewsbury Public Schools

For K-12 Reading Lists and Required Forms, go to:
<http://tinyurl.com/ShrewsburyReads>

Shrewsbury High School (9-12)

All students at Shrewsbury High School are expected to read at least one book over the summer. Students enrolled in A-level, B-level, AP and honors classes can expect a quiz on the grade-level required reading in the first week of school. Students enrolled in AP English have additional expectations that have been communicated directly from the AP teachers. Students enrolled in Essential English will read alternate texts, listed above, and will be assessed in alternate ways. Any student or parent who has a question about summer reading can contact Liza Trombley, Director of English, via email: ltrombley@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us

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FEE REBATE DRAWING

For families who were required to pay for two students the following prizes will be distributed:

\$500 FIRST PRIZE - FULL refund for TWO students & \$250 SECOND PRIZE - FULL refund for ONE student

For families who were required to pay for one student the following prizes will be distributed:

\$250 FIRST PRIZE FULL refund for ONE student & \$125 SECOND PRIZE HALF refund for ONE student

For families that do not owe a fee, \$20 in gift cards to Wegman's will be distributed to the four drawing winners.